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## Author Attributions in Medieval Text Collections: An Exploration

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### Abstract

This article examines the role and function of author attributions in multi-text manuscripts containing Dutch, English, French or German short verse narratives. The findings represent one strand of the investigations undertaken by the cross-European project ‘The Dynamics of the Medieval Manuscript’, which analysed the dissemination of short verse narratives and the principles of organisation underlying the compilation of text collections. Whilst short verse narratives are more commonly disseminated anonymously, there are manuscripts in which authorship is repeatedly attributed to a text or corpus. Through six case studies, this article explores medieval concepts of authorship and how they relate to constructions of authority, whether regarding an empirical figure or a literary construction. In addition, it looks at how authorship plays a role in manuscript compilation, and at the effects of attributions (by author and/or compiler) on reception. The case studies include manuscripts from the thirteenth to fifteenth centuries, produced in a range of social and cultural contexts, and featuring some of the most important European authors of short verse narratives: Rutebeuf, Baudouin de Condé, Der Stricker, Konrad von Würzburg, Willem of Hildegasberch, and Geoffrey Chaucer. The preliminary findings contribute to our understanding of author attributions in text collections from across northern Europe and point towards future lines of enquiry into the role of authorship in medieval textual dissemination.

### Introduction

The research project ‘The Dynamics of the Medieval Manuscript’ (2010–2013) was concerned with the transmission of short verse narratives in four different languages, viewed from a European perspective.<sup>1</sup> Our investigations focused on multi-text codices, as this highly mobile genre rarely circulates in isolation. The intriguing role and construction of the author in these Dutch, English, French and German text collections attracted our attention. In this article, we discuss the results of our preliminary study of this neglected aspect of textual transmission in medieval manuscripts. In a roughly chronological order, we present six case studies, framed by synthesising remarks which point out the similarities and differences between instances of this phenomenon in different parts of medieval Europe.

Most medieval short verse narratives are transmitted without the name of an author attached to them within the texts. However, anonymity is not the rule, as is the case in, for example, German heroic epics. It is true that the majority of the authors of short verse narratives, usually transmitted as part of text collections, are unknown. But there are cases which show a frequent, if not constant, attribution of a text or a corpus of texts to an author (even if the same stories are also transmitted in forms where this author attribution is missing). Accordingly, we may ask: What are the functions and effects of author attributions, whether spurious or authentic, in multi-text manuscripts transmitting short verse narratives? There is not one overall answer

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<sup>1</sup> See [www.dynamicsofthemedievalmanuscript.eu](http://www.dynamicsofthemedievalmanuscript.eu).

to our question, and this article does not aim to give one. Rather, we intend to demonstrate some of the possible functions of author attributions as deduced from the manuscript evidence. Our focus on author attributions is not intended as part of the ongoing theoretical discussion about the death or resurgence of the author (see Burke 1998 and Jannidis a.o. 1999). However, through our comparative analyses, we may shed new light on the emerging importance of authorship in medieval vernacular literary transmission, and its implications for the production and reception of multi-text codices.

This study examines manuscripts transmitting texts from four linguistic areas. They reflect not only varying social and cultural backgrounds, but also different approaches to author attribution by medieval authors and, in particular, compilers of text collections. The reason for examining these approaches in a single article is to open up the discussion on the function of author attribution in a genre that is ubiquitous in European medieval literature.

We distinguish two basic forms of author attribution: self-attribution and attribution by someone other than the author. In the case of self-attribution, the author usually includes his name in the prologue or—more often—epilogue of a text. In many instances this type of self-attribution is limited to the last two lines in a kind of closing signature. It is typical of short verse narratives that these parts of the text are unstable and can be deleted in the course of copying. In addition to the various forms of self-attribution, texts can be assigned to an author by someone else. This is a typical feature of their written dissemination in multi-text codices.

Taking the manuscript contexts as our point of departure, two aspects of author attribution come to the fore.

I. What do author attributions tell us about the medieval concept of authorship and its relation to the construction of authority? For some author attributions it seems clear that to attribute a text to a certain author is a method of conferring on the text, its contents or its poetics an authority it might otherwise lack. For this to work, the name of an author has to be authoritative. One of the questions we have tackled is: Where does this presumed authority come from? There are at least two possibilities:

1. This authority can derive from the empirical person of the author. In this case the author had (or was reputed to have) a moral authority in real life, and this authority was conferred on any text attributed to him. Examples from the German tradition are writers such as Der Stricker (see case study 3) or Der Teichner.<sup>2</sup> Authority can also be artistic rather than moral, as in the case of Geoffrey Chaucer (although, as we shall see in case study 6, his literary authority was not always separable from a reputation for moral gravitas).<sup>3</sup> In such instances, the name of the author is connected with his

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<sup>2</sup> While one may question whether Der Teichner falls within the scope of an article dealing with short verse narratives (the narrative content of many of his poems being very low), in this case we have an author who clearly states in one of his texts that he has been approached by citizens of Vienna with the questions that he now answers in his poems (e.g. the beginning of his *Von tugenden*, 104,1): 'Ich wirt maniger sach gevrait' [I am asked many things]. We do not have to believe that this actually happened, but it is obviously a situation his audience found credible.

<sup>3</sup> Boffey (1995: 44) notes that a collection of pieces ascribed to Chaucer in London, British Library, Cotton Vitellius E xi. 'constructs a sagacious Chaucer' who is 'a fount of proverbial wisdom'.

literary achievements, whether in the field of short verse narratives or in other forms of writing.

2. Authors can also acquire authority by constantly naming themselves or by constantly being named in particular types of texts. If these texts are successful and if they show a high degree of cohesion, this can lead to the development of a text type that becomes identified with a particular author. Here, authority is achieved not so much by the extra-textual person of the author as by the success of a literary sub-genre that has become coterminous with an authorial name in the text or the paratext.<sup>4</sup> Thus, the names of frequently mentioned authors might not so much gesture towards real identities, but rather construct an author-figure that is itself a literary creation, a product of manuscript transmission. This concerns authors such as Der Stricker (case study 3) and Willem of Hildegarsberch (case study 5). Whilst Rutebeuf (case study 1) does not become synonymous with a single type of literary sub-genre, the frequent self-attribution in a diverse range of texts establishes the inimitability of his poetic persona and bestows authority on the texts that bear his name. Finally, we have to take into account that author attributions might only reflect local reputation, promoted by the proximity to a real-life author, and do not confer authority at all. This is presumably the case in texts which are attributed to an author by just mentioning a common first name, such as Heynrickus.<sup>5</sup>

II. The second aspect of author attribution we have considered relates to the transmission of texts in multi-text codices. What are the functions of author attributions in manuscripts and how do they affect the reception of the texts and codices? As our material shows, the answers to these questions vary considerably, not only for different authors but also for different periods. Of considerable interest are cases in which the attribution of a text to a certain author has enhanced its distribution (see case study 3).

Within our corpus, several aspects of author attribution have been identified, along with their effects on the dissemination of short verse narratives. For example, the recurrent transmission of the name of the author in the closing couplets of a narrative is a signature which also functions as an indicator that the reader has reached the end of a text.<sup>6</sup> This kind of attribution, therefore, also guarantees the integrity of the individual narrative: only with the signature is the text complete. Another possible function of author attributions that is especially relevant in manuscripts with diverse contents is the creation of a sense of cohesion. Scribal attributions of texts to particular authors or the creation of an author collection within a multi-text codex can increase the sense of unity (see case studies 1 and 2).

Author attribution can also guide the interpretation of a narrative. If a text is attributed to an author who is usually associated with moral tales, this line of interpretation

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<sup>4</sup> Whilst it is not known if the name relates to a real or fictitious figure, the attribution of authorship to 'Garin' in a number of *fabliaux* is believed to have functioned as a *senhal* for the genre: 'Garin is one of the signals that lets the audience know what kind of poem it is dealing with'. See Busby 1986: 71 and Baumgartner 2002.

<sup>5</sup> The name Heynrickus concludes a short Middle Dutch narrative in MS Brussels, RL, II 144 (fol. 88r). The name was crossed out, which probably indicates that it had lost its function in the context of the text collection.

<sup>6</sup> This attribution seems authorial, although it would be possible for scribes to add a name at this point and make it look as if it is not part of the scribal paratext.

might be stressed, even in cases where it is not immediately obvious (see case study 3).<sup>7</sup>

The ways the paratext and/or organization of material attributes authorship vary according to the type of manuscript (or codicological unit) we are dealing with. Some manuscripts (or parts thereof) might function as an author collection (see case studies 1 and 2) while other manuscripts are governed by other structures (or have no discernible structure), resulting in different modes of author attribution. Author attributions, therefore, tell us much about the compilatory processes at work in different types of multi-text codices, and about the possible organizing principles behind an individual manuscript.

Our starting point was manuscript evidence, not edited texts (although we have, where available, used either editions of individual manuscripts or editions which include manuscript variants of incipits, headings, explicits). The exact (and often variant) wording of author attributions within the body of the texts (including prologues and epilogues) and in the paratexts are included in our considerations. For the purposes of this article we consider paratexts to be: scribal tituli and explicits at the beginning and/or the end of a text or a group of texts, headings, illustrations (see case study 2) and contemporary marginal notes. Thus we consider headings both of individual texts and of corpora of texts that are summarily attributed to a single author.

### **1 Rutebeuf in Paris, BNF, fr. 837: An Author Apart**

BNF, fr. 837 is one of the most renowned collections of short verse narratives in French. This thirteenth-century codex from north-eastern France transmits a heterogeneous range of texts. Although the majority of works are anonymous, there are items by over thirty recognised or named authors and in some cases it transmits the totality of their known poetic output.<sup>8</sup> Yet authorship does not appear to play a role in the organization of this codex; the pieces by known authors do not tend to be grouped according to their shared authorship. One poet, however, is privileged above his peers. In the midst of fr. 837's heterogeneity we find thirty-one works by a single author, set in a paratextual framework of authorship. This select corpus of works belongs to the famous thirteenth-century poet known as Rutebeuf.

BNF, fr. 837 is an organic compilation but there is evidence that components of the original collection have been removed or lost.<sup>9</sup> A late fourteenth-century annotator recorded the items believed to be missing.<sup>10</sup> In its current form, fr. 837 remains a substantial codex, amounting to almost 250 items.<sup>11</sup> Written by a single scribe, the texts are presented in a highly consistent manner and minimal blank space is left

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<sup>7</sup> See also the discussion of *Das Almosen*, attributed to Der Teichner, by Nicola Zotz 2014.

<sup>8</sup> These include the Clerc de Vaudoy and Henri d'Andeli. See Collet 2005: 177–78.

<sup>9</sup> Keith Busby suggests the removal of quires was a deliberate choice to render the codex 'an anthology of shorter works' (1999), 140–41.

<sup>10</sup> Sylvie Lefèvre suggests that the annotator had access to a table of contents which has since been lost (2005: 219).

<sup>11</sup> Lefèvre identifies 249 items, but this figure is relative to the interpretation of textual boundaries, notably complicated by the *saluts* and their responses, and the accidental division of 'du leu et de l'ove' when the codex was rebound (f. 250v and f. 252r).

between each piece.<sup>12</sup> Originally, each item was only identified by the scribe in the explicit. However, the same annotator who listed the missing items also added *tituli* in the blank spaces before the beginning of each piece, altering the reading experience offered by the codex.

Apart from Rutebeuf, only three other authors are named in the original and added paratext.<sup>13</sup> The Clerc de Vaudoy (*Dit des droiz*, ff. 31rb–33va) and Moniot (de Paris?) (*Dit de fortune*, ff. 247vb–248va) are named within their texts as well as in the paratext.<sup>14</sup> In the case of the third poet, Jean Bodel, the codex contains seven works commonly attributed to him, dispersed throughout the collection. However, his name only appears in the paratext of his *Congés* (ff. 59ra–62vb), which is undoubtedly due to the autobiographical nature of this type of text.<sup>15</sup> Significantly, fr. 837 also contains the only copy of Jean Bodel's *Deus Chevaus* in which the narrator lists the catalogue of his 'fablel'. However, his name does not appear within this *fabliau* or in the paratext.

Turning to Rutebeuf's collection, it is possible to note the exceptional status of the author in this section covering almost 50 folios. His series of works is introduced by the *only* original introductory paratext: 'Ci commencent li dit rustebuef' (f. 283vb) [Here begin the works of Rutebeuf]. Following the thirty-one texts, the scribe then marks the end of Rutebeuf's corpus with 'Expliciunt tuit li dit rustebuef' (f. 332va) [Here end all the works of Rutebeuf], closing the frame of his authorship. Two texts in fr. 837 which are associated with Rutebeuf in other multi-text codices fall outside of this frame. *Les Ordres de Paris* (f. 181ra–vb) and (the doubtfully attributed) *Les neuf joies Nostre Dame* (ff. 179rb–180rb) precede the author collection and are divided by Huon Archevesque's *De larguece et de debnereté*.<sup>16</sup> Rutebeuf is not named as the author within either of these pieces, nor in the original explicit or added titulus. Therefore their exclusion does not undermine the integrity of the Rutebeuf collection in fr. 837.<sup>17</sup>

Little is known about the figure of Rutebeuf apart from what is suggested by his texts, the majority of which are dated between 1248 and 1272. It is uncertain whether 'Rutebeuf' was the poet's real name or a pseudonym for his poetic persona. He frequently names himself within his texts, often exploiting its potential puns. For

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<sup>12</sup> The digitised microfilm is on Gallica (<http://gallica.bnf.fr>) and there is also a published facsimile: Omont 1932.

<sup>13</sup> Several other authors' names are included almost exclusively at the beginning or end of their texts, but their names do not feature in the paratext.

<sup>14</sup> In the opening and closing paratext it is written: 'des drois au clerc de Vouday' (f. 31rb) / 'Explicit les droiz au clerc de voudrai' (f. 33va); and 'le dit moniot de fortune' (f. 247vb) / 'Explicit le dit de fortune monniot' (f. 248va).

<sup>15</sup> Jean Bodel is named in the paratext of all the other manuscripts which contain the *Congés*. In fr. 837, 'les conges Jehan Bodel' features in both the original explicit and fourteenth-century titulus. In his *Congés*, '[A] number of times we witness him citing himself as an authority or using his audience's familiarity with his work and reputation to establish the credentials of his composition.' See Tudor 2006: 706.

<sup>16</sup> The works by Rutebeuf are referred to using the titles in *Œuvres complètes de Rutebeuf* 1959–1960.

<sup>17</sup> The attribution of *Les neuf joies Nostre Dame* to Rutebeuf is based on its presence in the largest Rutebeuf collection, found in BNF, fr. 1635. The items found within the designated section of fr. 837 thus conflict with the construction of the author and his corpus in fr. 1635. Whilst the conflicting evidence makes it difficult to ascertain which attributions are correct or incorrect, it also underlines how authors are constructed through codices.

example in *La Vie de Sainte Elysabel* (ff. 283vb–294vb), the first text in the Rutebeuf section of fr. 837, the elaborate wordplay on his name spans thirteen lines and represents one of the longest passages of this nature.<sup>18</sup> It is therefore unsurprising that this text appears at the head of the collection. The following item, *Le Sacristain et la Femme au Chevalier* (ff. 294vb–298va), also includes a similar section of wordplay on ‘Rutebuef’ in its epilogue.<sup>19</sup>

Rutebeuf’s corpus is predominantly written in the first person. Moreover, a number of his texts purport autobiographical experience, for example *Le Mariage Rutebuef* (ff. 307vb–308va), *La Complainte Rutebuef* (ff. 308va–309va) and *La Mort Rutebuef* (ff. 332rb–va).<sup>20</sup> His name becomes an intrinsic part of the title used to identify these works in the paratext of the extant manuscripts, much in the same manner as Jean Bodel’s *Congés*. In fr. 837, they are the only items within the Rutebeuf collection to include his name in both the original and added paratext.<sup>21</sup> In addition to the implicit connections in the ‘autobiographical’ works, there are other intertextual relationships within his wider corpus. There are recurrent themes and characters, and some works form an interrelated pair, such as the dyad of *La Griesche d’été* (ff. 304va–305ra) and *La Griesche d’hiver* (f. 305ra–va). These threads between his texts weave together the tapestry of his corpus and together construct the authorial persona.

Yet, his body of work does not represent a homogeneous and unified whole. In contrast to, for example, the narratives by Willem of Hildegarsberch (case study 5), it is formed of diverse genres, including saints’ lives, *fabliaux*, satirical texts against the mendicant orders, and complaints, as well as an *Ave Maria*. Rutebeuf does not only name himself in the more elevated genres. The mark of his authorship is just as likely to be found within his *fabliaux* as in his saints’ lives. Three of his five works identified as *fabliaux* appear in the collection in fr. 837. In *La dame qui fit trois tours autour du moutier* (ff. 305va–306va) he names himself in the last couplet, and in the scatological *Le pet au vilain* (ff. 315ra–rb), his name appears ten lines from the end.<sup>22</sup> The combination of his strong and singular poetic voice, the frequent self-attribution, repeated autobiographical gestures and the intertextual nature of elements within his body of work together establish the authority of his poetic identity. The presence of his corpus at the heart of a multi-text codex like fr. 837 both corroborates and enhances this status.

The Rutebeuf collection in fr. 837 is also remarkable when compared with the two other multi-text manuscripts with large components of his corpus, namely BNF, fr. 1593 and BNF, fr. 1635. BNF, fr. 1593 is a diverse composite codex formed in the fifteenth century from thirteenth-century codicological units. Rutebeuf’s works appear in three separate series, the most substantial of which numbers twenty-one texts.<sup>23</sup> Copied in the thirteenth century, BNF, fr. 1635 comprises two codicological units: the

<sup>18</sup> See ll. 2156–2168, *La Vie de Sainte Elysabel*, *Œuvres complètes*, vol. 2, 60–166.

<sup>19</sup> See ll. 750–760, *Le Sacristain et la Femme au Chevalier*, *Œuvres complètes*, vol. 2, 204–34.

<sup>20</sup> In the other two copies of *La Mort Rutebuef*, the poem has the title *La Repentance Rutebuef*. As the editors suggest, this title in fr. 837 was probably created in light of its position (and function) at the end of the author collection. *Œuvres complètes*, 573–78. See discussion below.

<sup>21</sup> There is one exception—Rutebeuf’s name also features in the explicit of his *Ave Maria* (f. 328ra–vb): ‘Explicit lave maria rustebuef’.

<sup>22</sup> Rutebeuf’s name does not feature in his third *fabliau* *Frere Denise* (ff. 329va–331rb).

<sup>23</sup> The remaining works by Rutebeuf appear in clusters of three and two texts in BNF, fr. 1593. See *Œuvres complètes*, 12–17.

first exclusively contains works by Rutebeuf and is the largest single grouping of his corpus; the second is composed of an incomplete copy of Alexandre de Paris' *Roman d'Alexandre* and Eustache's *Fuerre de Gadres*. Yet, in neither of these two manuscripts do we find the same paratextual framework as that in fr. 837. Indeed, as Sylvia Huot suggests, of these three codices fr. 837 is the only one in which 'the identity of the author was elevated to an organizational principle' (1987: 219). The arrangement of his autobiographical works—notably *Le Mariage Rutebuef* and *La Complainte Rutebuef* at the midpoint of the collection—are read 'as a deliberate evocation of the author-protagonist at the centre of his collected works'. Moreover, the position of *La Mort Rustebuef* at the end of the collection and the use of this title rather than *La Repentance Rutebeuf* is seen 'to mark the close of Rutebeuf's poetic corpus and of his life' (Azzam 2005). Yet beyond the arrangement of these autobiographical pieces, Huot argues that the compiler shows little concern regarding their order.

More recently, Waguih Azzam considered Rutebeuf's collection in fr. 837 in relation to the dynamics of the manuscript as a whole. He argues that the arrangement of Rutebeuf's collection offers important insights into the compilation of fr. 837, sharing the same levels of disparity and variety of register, genre and form found throughout the codex (Azzam 2005). In this light, Rutebeuf's author collection becomes a way of understanding and engaging with the heterogeneity of the codex as a whole.

## 2 Baudouin de Condé in Paris, Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, MS 3142

Arsenal, MS 3142 is a beautifully presented thirteenth-century manuscript compilation from north-eastern France. Within this elaborately decorated codex, the figure of the author plays a significant role in the organization of its literary, didactic and devotional content.<sup>24</sup> Waguih Azzam and Olivier Collet suggest that underlying its composition is 'l'émergence d'une conscience et d'une perception nouvelles de la figure de l'auteur', expressed through 'une triple logique de représentation, structurale, narrative et picturale'.<sup>25</sup> This new concept of the author is indissociable from the creation of (an) authority. In addition to the textual and paratextual emphasis on authorship, the programme of representation encourages the association of the medieval authors with the great *auctores*, foregrounding the didactic function of the medieval texts and the author's role as teacher.<sup>26</sup> We will begin by exploring how authority and authorship are constructed in the codex, before focusing on the collection of short verse narratives by Baudouin de Condé within Arsenal, MS 3142.

MS 3142 contains an exceptional proportion of attributed texts for a thirteenth-century codex. The principal components of the manuscript are the complete works of thirteenth-century poet Adenet le Roi: *Cléomadés* (ff. 1ra–72rb), *Les Enfances Ogier* (ff. 73ra–119vb), *Berte aus grans piés* (ff. 120vb–140va), and *Buevon de Conmarchis* (ff. 179ra–201va).<sup>27</sup> In addition to the king of minstrels, the manuscript includes

<sup>24</sup> A colour digitisation of this manuscript is available on Gallica (<http://gallica.bnf.fr>).

<sup>25</sup> For a detailed codicological, historical and literary analysis of Arsenal MS 3142 see Azzam & Collet 2001: 219.

<sup>26</sup> For an overview and discussion of author portraits, see Meier 2000.

<sup>27</sup> In the prologue to *Cléomadés*, Adenet lists his works in the order in which they are found in Arsenal MS 3142: 'Ie qui fis dogier le danois / Et de bertain qui fu ou bois / Et de buevon de conmarchis / Ai vn autre liure rempris . . .' (f. 1ra) [I, who wrote about Ogier the Dane, and about Berte who was in the woods, and about Beuve de Commarchis, have started another book . . .].



works by some of the most established author figures of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. The well-disseminated dyad by the Renclus de Molliens, *Miserere* (ff. 203ra–216va) and *Carité* (ff. 216va–226vb), is followed by the less conventional pairing of Jean Bodel's *Congés* (ff. 227ra–229ra) with his *Chanson des Saisnes* (ff. 229rb–253vb).<sup>28</sup> Alart de Cambrai's *Livre de philosophie et de moralité* (ff. 141ra–166ra) suggestively appears among the works of Adenet. It shares a similar form to two 'collective' works that appear later in the codex: Marie de France's *Fables* (ff. 256ra–273ra) and the *Proverbes au Vilain* (ff. 273ra–278vb). In the *Livre*, rubrics and historiated initials highlight the wisdom of each cited *auctor*; in the same manner, historiated initials mark the start of each fable in Marie's collection. Following the *Proverbes au Vilain*, there is a series of shorter works. Within this section and of particular interest to our project is the collection of short texts by another eminent thirteenth-century poet, Baudouin de Condé. The final work and only piece in prose is the *Proverbes de Sénèque* (ff. 320rb–321vc), which with the *Proverbes au Vilain* forms a frame around the shorter pieces (Azzam & Collet 2001: 215). Each of the authors listed above is represented at least once in the programme of illustrations, in either a miniature or a historiated initial. In these portraits, the author figures are individualised by their style of dress and physical features. The 'author' takes the form of court poet, cleric and monastic writer to name but a few.<sup>29</sup> Whereas some figures are pictured producing their texts, others are presented performing or reading out their finished work.<sup>30</sup>

One aspect of the iconography of MS 3142 which has not been considered in detail is the series of historiated initials which portray the *auctores* cited in Alart de Cambrai's *Livre de philosophie et de moralité*. Azzam and Collet briefly mention that the images of the philosophers could be added to the list of author portraits (Azzam & Collet 2001: 222, note 46). However, the continuity between the portraits of the *auctores* and the contemporary medieval authors has not been fully explored. The basic elements of the 'auctor portraits' are repetitive: each figure reads from a scroll, their arms are frequently set in didactic gestures, and in the majority of cases, they are pictured sitting on an orange-coloured stone plinth. Yet, subtle differences in headwear and physical features individualise their portraits. For example, Solomon is portrayed wearing a crown (f. 143vb), whereas Ovid (f. 154va) and Aristotle (f. 155vc) appear as tonsured clerics, the latter distinguished by his beard. Unlike the fairly consistent set of rubrics, this elaborate programme of illustrations does not appear to have been an inherent part of the copying tradition of the *Livre*.<sup>31</sup> In addition to the exceptional series of illustrations, the position of Alart's *Livre* is disruptive in the context of a manuscript that predominantly groups texts by author, for it begins in the final quire of *Berte aus grans piés* and thus divides *Buevon de*

<sup>28</sup> The folio/s containing the conclusion of the *Chanson des Saisnes* is/are missing from the codex.

<sup>29</sup> Indeed, Sylvia Huot writes: 'A collection like MS 3142 suggests a different view of vernacular texts as self-contained units, crafted in a certain way by a poet operating under certain circumstances; they bear a historicity as texts, referring not only to the fictional or moral world that they describe but also to an original and unique act of composition' (1987: 45).

<sup>30</sup> Azzam and Collet link the images of the author at work with the texts in which the author names himself/herself in the first person and the images of the author as orator with the instances in which the author is named in the third person (2001: 222).

<sup>31</sup> We are aware of one other copy with multiple illustrations, found in Arras, Médiathèque municipale, MS 657 (second half of the 13th c.). In the facsimile of the *chansonniere* unit, there is a description of the presentation of Alart's *Livre*: 'Le texte est divisé en para-graphes, précédés de rubriques en prose, et orné de nombreuses miniatures'. See Jeanroy 1925: 6.

*Conmarchis* from the other components of Adenet's collection.<sup>32</sup> Yet, Alart's *Livre* offers the compiler an opportunity to align visually the medieval authors with the great *auctores*, and this alignment has the potential to increase the *auctoritas* of the contemporary author(s). The repetitive and formulaic elements found in both the author and *auctor* portraits, such as the scrolls and orange- coloured plinths, affiliate the medieval writers with their great forefathers.<sup>33</sup> Moreover, the physical gestures of the *auctores* whilst reading from their scrolls, in addition to the accompanying rubrics, underline their pedagogic role.<sup>34</sup> The author as writer, narrator and orator becomes indissociable from the author / *auctor* as teacher, thus adding another dimension to the construction of authorship in the codex. In this light, the position of Alart's *Livre* amongst Adenet's corpus enhances the didactic status of the latter's long narrative works and accentuates the authority of this medieval poet and his peers.

Alongside Adenet, Baudouin de Condé's works form an author collection within the series of shorter texts, which will be considered in light of the representations of authorship and authority already discussed. Active between 1240 and 1280, Baudouin de Condé is the author of over twenty works, primarily 'dits', of a moralising and didactic nature. His poetic career is associated with north-eastern France and Flanders, including a residency at Marguerite de Constantinople's court.<sup>35</sup> Another thirteenth-century manuscript with several works by Baudouin, BNF, fr. 12467, has been described as a 'sibling' of Arsenal MS 3142. Whilst the two manuscripts are believed to have been created in the same workshop from the same exemplar, BNF, fr. 12467 shares neither the principles of organization nor the same level of coherent arrangement or interest in authorship evident in MS 3142 (Azzam & Collet 2001: 212–15). Indeed, the seven texts by Baudouin are dispersed in fr. 12467, diluting his authorship. By contrast, the fifteen items which form Baudouin's collection in MS 3142 appear in succession (ff. 300va to 320ra), each introduced by a rubric and historiated initial.<sup>36</sup> In addition, the frame of his authorship in MS 3142 is articulated by a similar rubric to the one found at the start of Rutebeuf's works in BNF, fr. 837: 'Ci commencent li dit baudouin de conde' [Here begin the works of Baudouin de Condé]. This is followed by a rubric that introduces the first of his texts: 'Cest uns salus de nostre dame' (f. 300va). Known as *Li Ave Maria* (ff. 300va–301ra), this poem does not feature as the first text in Baudouin's other author collections. However, in the context of MS 3142 it represents a logical transitional piece between the preceding sequence of Marian texts and the author collection.<sup>37</sup> *Li Ave Maria* is

<sup>32</sup> After Alart's *Livre*, a reworking of the book of Job in French verse (ff. 166rb–178vb) was added to the codex by a scribe and illuminator in the fourteenth century. An extra quire was required to complete this later addition and consequently the codex would have been rebound at this point. See Azzam & Collet 2001: 230–31.

<sup>33</sup> Alart de Cambrai (f. 141ra) and Marie de France (f. 256ra) are pictured on the same orange- coloured plinths, which could possibly be seen in light of their role as translators of classical works. The Virgin is also consistently portrayed sitting on the same style of orange seat, adding another dimension to its symbolism.

<sup>34</sup> In the rubric that accompanies the historiated initial of Aristotle, it states 'Aristotes dist con ne se doit mie/ fer en home qui se faint' (f. 155vc). The text then begins: 'Aristotes dist / et ensaigne . . .' (f. 155vc).

<sup>35</sup> See Scheler 1866–1867: vol. 1, 'Introduction', pp. V–XXXII, and *Dit de l'Olifant* (ll. 301–02), pp. 233–43. The lengthiest of Baudouin's collections occurs in Brussels, Royal Library, MS 9.411–26, which is Scheler's base manuscript.

<sup>36</sup> In addition to the fifteen items in MS 3142, there are five short word-play pieces without rubrics or historiated initials (f. 311rb–rc; f. 311rc; f. 316rc; f. 316va; f. 316va–vb).

<sup>37</sup> The five items immediately before Baudouin's collection are identified in the rubrics as: 'Ce sont les .ix. ioies nostre dame' (ff. 296ra–vc); 'Cest une priere de nostre dame' (ff. 296vc–297va); 'Cest la bible nostre dame en francois' (ff. 297va–299va); 'Cest uns salus de nostre dame' (ff. 299vb–300ra); 'Cest la priere Theophilus' (ff. 300ra–va).

the first of the dispersed items by Baudouin in fr. 12467 and is attributed to him in the rubric: ‘Cest li aue maria baudouin de conde’ (f. 54va). Whilst the historiated initials for this item in both codices represent Baudouin kneeling before the Virgin and child, the portrait in the Arsenal codex individualises the author. Rather than depicting his hands in the prayer position as in fr. 12467, he is pictured holding a scroll. This differentiates Baudouin from the figures in the historiated initials that accompany the afore-mentioned Marian pieces, personalising his intimate performance before the Virgin.<sup>38</sup> Moreover, the scroll recalls the preceding author and *auctor* portraits and thus invokes their authority. The differences between the organization and presentation of Baudouin’s works in these two ‘sibling volumes’ brings to the fore the deliberate and programmatic portrayal of authorship in MS 3142, exemplified by the idiosyncratic iconographic programme.

From the fourteenth century onwards, the concept of the author collection develops. Within the corpus of francophone multi-text manuscripts, we find, as in Dutch (case study 5), the emergence of ‘anthology codices devoted entirely to a single author’ and evidence suggesting the poet’s involvement in the compilation of his work.<sup>39</sup> Two fourteenth-century manuscripts with large components of Baudouin de Condé’s work combine his corpus with that of his son Jean.<sup>40</sup> In Arsenal, MS 3524, a rubric at the end of Baudouin’s collection links the father’s work with that of his progeny: ‘Ci finent le dit Baudouin de Condeit. & commencent après li Jehan son fil’ (f. 50v) [Here end Baudouin de de Condé’s *dits*. And next begin those by his son Jean].<sup>41</sup> Whereas the *translatio studii* of MS 3142 aligned the medieval authors with their classical predecessors, in MS 3524 the transfer of authority is genealogical and reflects the contemporary status of the father as *auctor*.

### 3 Munich, MS cgm 16 and Der Stricker

One of the first manuscripts to contain a group of short verse narratives in German is the Munich codex cgm 16. At the end of the codex, functioning as a filler at the end of a quire, six short verse narratives and a *Life of St Thomas* legend are collected. Today, the main text of the codex is Rudolf von Ems’ *Barlaam und Josaphat*. However, its first nineteen quires are missing and they most likely contained the *Christherre* chronicles.<sup>42</sup> At the end of the penultimate text of the manuscript, the main scribe, who identifies himself as Chunrat [i.e. Konrad], gives 1284 as its date of

<sup>38</sup> The series of figures kneeling in prayer before the Virgin in the preceding texts includes two young men (f. 296ra and f. 296vc), a young girl (f. 299vb) and a tonsured Theophilus (f. 300ra).

<sup>39</sup> Sylvia Huot analyses the fourteenth-century anthologies of *dits* by Watriquet de Couvin, of lyrics and *dits* by Guillaume de Machaut, and compilations by Jean Froissart (1987: 211–41). In the German tradition, we also find late author collections, possibly involving the author or circles near him (as is the case for Heinrich Kaufringer), but we have to note also that many early Stricker manuscripts (although not from his lifetime) are also author collections.

<sup>40</sup> These two collections are Arsenal, MS 3524 and BNF, fr. 1446. The latter is a composite codex made of different codicological units from the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, and Baudouin’s and Jean’s corpora are written by several scribes. However, the order is identical to Arsenal MS 3524, apart from one text. It would be worthwhile to explore if this codex was used as the exemplar for the more carefully presented Arsenal compilation.

<sup>41</sup> Original and translation cited from Huot (1987: 221).

<sup>42</sup> See <http://www.handschriftencensus.de/1311>; Gerhard 1972; Klemm 1998, Kat. Nr. 107.

completion, which was during the reign of Rudolf (von Habsburg). The manuscript most likely originates from Styria.<sup>43</sup>

The last group of short verse narratives has the following heading: 'Hie heben sich bispiel an' [Here begin the examples]. The heading is rubricated, with elongated letters at the top of the first column of the page and a very broad-spaced final 'n' to fill the line, followed by 'Von dem Strickaere' [by Der Stricker], still slightly larger than the normal script, in the second line. Here, Der Stricker clearly functions as an author's name. The manuscript was produced between forty and fifty years after the presumed death of Der Stricker. The prominent mention of the name indicates two things: firstly, the author's name was still well known; and secondly, it must fulfil an important function or else it would not have been put into the manuscript in such a prominent way. It is interesting to note that not only the author's name is given, but also a text type: 'bispiel'. In the context of the preceding text, this puts the following short verse texts in the same genre as the many didactic narratives included in Rudolf's *Barlaam und Josaphat*. Thus, 'bispiel' here might refer to a story with a moral content.

The group of texts starts with the 'bispiel' *Der Hund und der Stein* [The Dog and the Stone]. The next text, *Alters Unvermögen* [Age's Impotence], follows without any outward indication of a break; the only internal marker is the change of subject. The third text, *Der gefangene Räuber* [The Captured Robber], begins with a slightly embellished initial 'E' over two lines. However, the fourth text, *Die sechs Scharen der Teufel* [The Six Hosts of Devils], opens with an initial 'I' that stretches over nine lines between the two columns of text. None of these texts, attributed to Der Stricker, contains an author signature, so attribution to Der Stricker here works only through the introductory rubric to this part of the manuscript. The next text is again marked by an elongated initial 'I' spanning nine lines; in addition, there is a small rubric spaced at the end of two lines (the last line from the previous text, and the first line of the following), between the two text-columns, reading 'der werlde / lon' [The Wages of the World].<sup>44</sup> The last text in this group, *Drei Gott und der Welt verhasste Sünden* [Three Sins abhorred by God and the World], is (again) marked with a three-line initial 'D' and no title, and (again) does not contain an author's name. But *Der Welt Lohn* does: the four last lines attribute the text to Konrad von Würzburg, and this attribution is not removed in this manuscript. Clearly, the scribe—who is himself named Konrad, and who must have noted this attribution—is not worried by the double attribution created by the heading 'Von dem Strickaere'. He keeps Konrad's text under this heading and makes no correction regarding the attribution of authorship, but he differentiates this text from the other texts by adding a headline, although he does not break the regular pattern of his very evenly produced manuscript.

The contents are thematically linked: Der Stricker's texts are all concerned with sin, and *Der Welt Lohn* is the first narrative in German that clearly juxtaposes the beautiful front of the female figure of Frau Welt with her worm-eaten and ugly back

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<sup>43</sup> The last text was written by a different scribe. The main scribe probably comes from Styria, as a manuscript with comparable closing lines comes from the vicinity of Admont; cf. Klemm 1998

<sup>44</sup> The manuscript is digitized and available online at <http://daten.digital-sammlungen.de/~db/0003/bsb00035330/images/index.html?id=00035330&fip=eayayztsewqeayaxssdasyztsqrseayaxs&no=2&seite=172>.

(Kern 2009: 43). This short text can hardly be called a narrative, containing only one scene of a knight reading, to whom Frau Welt appears and shows her back—a scene that ends with the knight's promise to go on crusade. Thus, this text also dwells on the sins of the world, and clearly fits into both the didactic vein of Der Stricker texts and the overall tendency advocated by the *Barlaam* tradition which fills the main body of the manuscript, and to which this group of short verse narratives is an addendum.

But why was Konrad's text subsumed under the heading 'Stricker'? It not only contains the clear attribution to Konrad von Würzburg (still alive at the time of the production of the manuscript), but it also names its protagonist, the reading knight, Wirnt von Grafenberg, the author of the second most successful Arthurian romance after Wolfram's *Parzival* to this date: *Wigalois*.<sup>45</sup> It is not untypical, as we shall see, that these kinds of references are mistaken (or interpreted) as an author's name.

Christoph Gerhard has argued that there might be an alternative explanation (1972: 381–85): Konrad von Würzburg was associated with sentimental love stories (ranging from the *Herzmaere* [The Story of the Heart] to *Engelhard* and *Partonopier und Meliur*), historical anecdotes (*Heinrich von Kempten*, *Der Schwanritter* [The Swan Knight]) and bawdy tales (*Die halbe Birne* [The Half Pear]). Thus, it could rather undermine the impact of a moral tale if it were attributed to such a worldly author. By giving the text an individual title the scribe makes the beginning of the tale a little more conspicuous, but otherwise creates the impression that we are dealing with a Stricker text until the very end (where Konrad is named as an author), by which point the moral impact has already reached its target. We are not totally convinced by this interpretation,<sup>46</sup> but, slightly modified, it points in a plausible direction: Konrad worked in Basle and was still a living author. Der Stricker worked for a major part, if not all, of his professional life in Austria, and we are dealing with an Austrian manuscript. Der Stricker was locally well known and Konrad was not, as yet; so Konrad's moralistic tale is subsumed under Der Stricker's name. If this interpretation is correct, this manuscript is one of the first witnesses of a process that turns an author's name into the name for a genre. The rubric still announces 'bispiel' by Der Stricker, but incorporates another moralistic tale by a different author named in the text, without making the difference in authorship explicit. Thus, Konrad's text becomes a Stricker.

This development—an author's name becoming a name for a genre—has been sketched by Holznagel (1998: in particular 164–72). It is evident from a comparison with a later Viennese manuscript (Cod. Vind. 2884, dating from the end of the fourteenth century). Here, again, Rudolf's *Barlaam* is followed by a—this time larger—group of short verse narratives by Der Stricker. The manuscript closes with the only known transmission of one of Konrad von Würzburg's saints' lives in verse, *Pantaleon*. From a modern perspective, the manuscript could be divided into three parts: the first containing a long saint's life; the second a group of 39 short verse

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<sup>45</sup> This use of an author's name as the name for the protagonist of this tale has not yet been explained convincingly. We only mention it here, as it would offer a further opportunity to attribute the text to a famous author by just reading the first few lines of the text. It has to be admitted, however, that the scribe misspells the name as *Wirin*, and so, probably, does not know Wirnt von Grafenberg.

<sup>46</sup> The main reasons being: the opposition between religious and secular is, especially in the field of short verse narratives, a modern dichotomy that finds little support in their medieval transmission; furthermore, Konrad is also the author of three verse saints' lives and one extremely popular hymn in praise of the Virgin Mary. Thus, it makes little sense to regard him as an especially secular author.

narratives; and the third a briefer saint's life. But this distinction becomes blurred, not only when one takes into account that Rudolf's *Barlaam* is a text made up mainly of smaller individual narratives incorporated into a larger framework (and often travelling together with Stricker texts, see Holznagel 2002), but also because the individual Stricker texts are, via a scribal attribution at the end of the text group, seen as a finished entity. The scribe ends this part of the manuscript with: 'Hie nimt der stricker ein ende' [This is the end of Der Stricker]. Here, 'der stricker' with equal probability refers to an author or a collective text.<sup>47</sup>

The two examples illustrate two aspects of the naming of an author. First, the name can confer authority (and clearly Konrad's text is subsumed under the authority of Der Stricker in cgm 16). Secondly, it can also lose its connection to the individualized author and refer more to a text-type—a process attested in German literature also by Neidhart turning into 'ein Neidhart'. Even after this change, the author's name still confers authority, because these names become a kind of medieval literary 'brand'.

#### 4 The Transmission of *Das Herzmaere*

The case of Konrad von Würzburg is instructive in several other ways. For the purpose of this article we will limit ourselves to one example, the transmission of *Das Herzmaere* [The Tale of the Heart]. Many of the manuscripts (12 in all)<sup>48</sup> which contain *Das Herzmaere* do not name Konrad as the author. *Das Herzmaere* shows several special features. Unlike most short verse narratives in German it has a prologue and a (long) epilogue. However, the epilogue is totally omitted in several manuscripts. The passage that contains the mention of the author's name (ll. 580ff.) is only transmitted in two fifteenth-century manuscripts. This raises questions regarding the category of authorship: why is Konrad's name omitted in the earlier manuscripts, especially in light of the general agreement that these lines are an integral part of the text?<sup>49</sup> Even if one argued that the lines were a later addition, the question remains how this information was transmitted, since we have evidence that it is a correct attribution by looking at two earlier manuscripts, one from Straßburg and one from Heidelberg. Read together, these two manuscripts offer additional insights into how the category of 'author' functions.

In the Straßburg manuscript, Stadtbibliothek, Cod. A94 (first half of the fourteenth century, now lost),<sup>50</sup> the text is transmitted on ff. 4v–8vb. Here, the text is introduced by a rubric: 'Dise mere mahte meister gotfrit von strazburg vnd seit von der minnen' [This text was written by master Gottfried von Straßburg and tells about love]. The attribution to Gottfried von Straßburg is no invention of the scribe, but taken from the prologue of *Das Herzmaere*, where Gottfried von Straßburg is cited as an authority for the truth that stories about love are the right reading material for lovers—an

<sup>47</sup> In a similar vein, 'Ysopet' (or 'Isopet') was used as a generic label for a collection of fables in Old French codices, but refers to the ancient Greek author Aesop.

<sup>48</sup> One manuscript, Leipzig, Universitätsbibl., Ms. Apel 8, that the current editions list as a lost manuscript (since 1885), was rediscovered in 2004.

<sup>49</sup> Cf. the last editor of the text, Klaus Grubmüller: 'Der ausführliche Schluß mit der Nennung Konrads von Würzburg als Autor ist nur in den jungen Handschriften l und m überliefert. Dennoch leidet es keinen Zweifel, daß diese Verfassersignatur den Sachverhalt richtig darstellt; das *Herzmäre* fügt sich nach Stil und Tendenz aufs beste in das Oeuvre Konrads von Würzburg (um 1230–1287) ein (. . .)' (Grubmüller 1996: 1122).

<sup>50</sup> For this important manuscript, lost during a fire in the siege of Straßburg by German troops in 1870, research relies on Myller, 1784–85.

argument that Gottfried himself presents in his *Tristan* prologue.<sup>51</sup> The scribe made the (understandable) error of attributing the text to Gottfried (perhaps furthered by his knowledge of the name, since the manuscript comes from the same area where Gottfried worked and which is also the centre of *Tristan* transmission). And, indeed, authority and text fit well together. The misattribution is not even noticeable, since the epilogue containing Konrad's name is omitted.

That Konrad was known as the author of the text at this time is shown by a comparison with Heidelberg cpg 341 (first quarter of the fourteenth century).<sup>52</sup> Here, every text is preceded by rubrics relating to its contents, in this case: 'Ditz mer ist daz herze genant / vnt tut triwe uns bekant' [This story is called 'the Heart' and shows us faithfulness; 346ra]. Here, the prologue is adapted:

Ich prueve in minen sinnen / das lauterliches minnen / der werlde ist wor- den wilde /  
da von solt ir pilde / ir ritter vnd ir vrowen / an disem mere schowen / was vns von  
gantzer liebe seit / vnd ouch von rechter warheit / von wierzeburch meister Conrat /  
wer vf der waren minnen phat . . .<sup>53</sup>

The important thing is that in this reworking Konrad is named as the author of the text. This is all the more astonishing as the epilogue with the author attribution is missing. Thus, we have evidence of knowledge of authorship travelling separately from the text itself. The scribe, mistaking the naming of the authority Gottfried in the prologue for the naming of the 'real' author, corrects the name (but garbles the text), because he knows that Konrad is the actual author of *Das Herzmaere*. Although clearly not in the text, we do not know how this information was transmitted. In lists of rubrics? In tables of contents? But this example shows that the attribution of authorship in short verse narrative was important at least for some collectors and / or scribes. And it shows that it can be found in rubrics, in the texts—and in ways that we can- not yet completely explain.

## 5 Two Willem of Hildegarsberch Manuscripts

Brussels, Royal Library, 15.659–61 is a paper manuscript which was completed, according to a note on folio 134r, in the Brabantine town of Oss in 1469 (see Meder 1991: 16). The phrase 'Et sic est finis', which concludes a collection of 119 short verse texts, precedes the colophon, which is followed by various other texts, copied by different scribes on folios 134v–189v. This collection of verse texts has also

<sup>51</sup> The beginning of *Das Herzmaere* in Grubmüller's edition (following the older edition of Edward Schröder, based on the manuscripts Heidelberg and Straßburg) reads like this: 'Ich prueve in mîme sinne / daz lûterlîchiu minne / der werlte ist worden wilde. / dar umb sô sulen bilde / ritter unde frouwen / an disem maere schouwen, / wand ez von ganzer liebe seit. / des bringet uns gewisheit / von Strâzburg meister Gotfrit: / swer ûf der wâren minne trit . . .' [I have noted that pure love has become a stranger to this world. Thus, knights and ladies should take an example from this tale, because it tells of true love. For the following thought Master Gottfried of Straßburg is a witness: Whoever follows the path of true love (must hear stories about love)].

<sup>52</sup> The sister manuscript, the Kalocsa-Geneva codex, has a missing quire that would have contained *Das Herzmaere*. The manuscript is digitized and can be read at: [http://digi.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/diglit/cpg\\_341](http://digi.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/diglit/cpg_341).

<sup>53</sup> A tentative translation of the syntactically problematical reworking would be: I have noticed in my mind that true love has become estranged from the world. Thus, you, knights and ladies, should take an example from this tale, what master Konrad von Würzburg tells us about complete love and right truthfulness. Whoever sets his foot on the path of true love . . .

survived in another codex, The Hague, Royal Library, 128 E 6. In its present, incomplete, state, this paper manuscript, which was copied around 1480, preserves 117 short verse texts. The collection, which must have originally numbered 120 texts (five folios, on which three texts were copied, are missing), concludes, on folio 134r, with the words ‘Nota bene’, followed by a series of sayings on folios 134r–136r.<sup>54</sup> The order of the texts in both manuscripts is the same from number 32 in the Hague codex onwards, albeit that the Brussels series now and then includes texts which are copied in the Hague manuscript before nr. 32.<sup>55</sup> This difference can be explained elegantly. Initially, the Hague scribe copied the texts from an exemplar that preserved a smaller number of texts than the codex from which Brussels was made. After copying thirty-one texts, he got hold of the more extensive exemplar, which he used from then onwards, ignoring the texts he had copied already.<sup>56</sup>

The collection of 120 texts includes 40 texts which contain an author attribution to Willem of Hildegasberch.<sup>57</sup> Born in the village of Hillegersberg, nowadays a district of Rotterdam, Willem was an itinerant professional storyteller, who recited his Middle Dutch texts at courts, and occasionally at monasteries and towns.<sup>58</sup> The expenditure accounts of the Dutch court in The Hague make it abundantly clear that he was a much appreciated guest there, regularly performing before members of the higher aristocracy in the period between 1383 and 1408 (see Meder 1991: 541–62). Probably following the author’s death in 1408 or 1409, the Count of Holland, Willem VI, bought a book on April 12, 1409, according to the accounts, in which many of the poet’s texts were written down (Meder 1991: 557). It has been suggested that the count’s purchase served, directly or indirectly, as the (now lost) common exemplar of the Brussels and The Hague manuscripts (Meder 1991: 24–26).

Should we ascribe all the short verse texts which have come down to us in the two extant manuscripts to Willem of Hildegasberch? The beginnings of the text collections could have provided valuable indications for such an overall authorship, for example by means of a prologue or just a rubric, as is the case for Rutebeuf (case study 1), Baudouin de Condé (case study 2) and Der Stricker (case study 3, esp. Cod. Vind. 2884). However, both Dutch manuscripts are incomplete: the first quire of the Brussels codex lacks an unknown number of folios; folio 6 is now the first leaf of the Hague codex. Arguments for Willem’s general authorship have to be deduced, therefore, from the texts themselves. Number 48, *Hoe man ende wijf sullen leven* [How man and woman should live together] shows that the text collection definitely includes texts by authors other than Willem, since it was written by the Brabantine poet Jan of Boendale, as part of his *Lekenspiegel* [Laymen’s Mirror], completed in 1330 (Meder 1991: 82–83). However, it is likely that this addition of a non-Willem text is not due to a scribe or compiler but to Willem himself, who knew the *Lekenspiegel*—he refers to it in text 61, ll. 6–9—and must have tacitly included

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<sup>54</sup> See Deschamps 1972: 125–25; Meder 1991: 15–16. The codex consists of two parts: the second part, copied by another scribe on folios 137–201, preserves Dirc Potter’s *Der minnen loep*.

<sup>55</sup> In both codices the texts are not numbered. The numbers have been assigned by the editors of the text edition, see Bisschop & Verwijns 1870

<sup>56</sup> This hypothesis was put forward by W. F. Tiemeyer in 1916. See Meder 1991: 21–25.

<sup>57</sup> The data concerning these 40 texts were collected by research assistant Janna Bijzen (Utrecht University).

<sup>58</sup> For a study of Willem’s life and works in English, see van Oostrom 1992: 37–76.



Boendale's text in his own oeuvre as a performer without naming his colleague.<sup>59</sup> Since the 120 short verse texts share many features concerning style, structure and content, and since other examples of non-Willem texts in the text collection are lacking, Dutch scholarship assumes, albeit with the necessary reservation, that the Brussels and The Hague manuscripts preserve author collections (Meder 1991: 28–30).

Although the 40 texts which are attributed to Willem are spread unevenly over the two collections, various groups are clearly discernible. Clusters of author attributions include, in both codices, text numbers 56–59, 61–63, 86–91, 93–100. The rationale—if any—behind these groupings remains unclear. In principle, rubrics can provide a clue to the reasons for the clustering of texts in a manuscript, but in this case they do not add to our information on author attributions, since in both codices they are purely content-related. The only proper name is part of the rubric preceding text 103: 'Salomoens woert' [Solomon's words].

Almost all attributions to Willem appear in the epilogues of the texts, the only exception being text 97, *Vander drierehande staet der werlt* [Of the world's three orders], in which the author is mentioned (ll. 249–50) when he concludes his discussion of the orders in ancient Rome and starts talking about contemporary orders. In most of these epilogues, both the author's first name and his place of birth are indicated. The closing lines of text 51, *Van tregiment van goeden heren* [Of the rule by good lords], for example, ask God to protect 'Elken heer die reden doet, / Waer si sijn tot enigher stede / Ende Willem van Hildegasberch mede' [each nobleman who is just, wherever he may be, and W. of H.; ll. 106–08]. In four cases (texts 62, 81, 83, 91), the author attribution in the epilogue is limited to Willem, which was—and is—a common first name in the Low Countries. Within the framework of the text collections, Willem is, of course, identical to Willem of Hildegasberch.

Four texts feature a protagonist who is addressed as 'Willem' in the stories. In text 12, *Van enen cruut ende hiet selve* [Of a herb called sage], the first-person narrator recounts an event which happened to him in the past: he talked to a young man, to whom he mentioned his name, Willem (l. 178), and who called him by that name (l. 275). In text 32, *Vanden ouden ende vanden jonghen* [Of old and young people], a damsel twice calls the protagonist Willem (ll. 72, 91). Text 100, *Van ghenoegeten* [Of pleasure], consists of a dialogue involving a wise man and the protagonist, who is addressed as Willem (ll. 14, 48, 78, 123, 160). The same situation occurs in text 102, entitled *Een disputacie* [A colloquy; The Hague] or *Een notabel* [A parable; Brussels]. The protagonist, who is called Willem (ll. 22, 46, 92, 122, 141, 158, 212), and a wise man talk about greed and injustice. Two of these four texts feature an author's name in their epilogue: Willem of Hildegasberch (12: ll. 298–99; 102: ll. 226–27). In the other two texts, 32 and 100, this author attribution is missing. However, the readers of the text collections are evidently encouraged to equate the protagonist Willem with the author. This suggestion is reinforced in text 32, in which the damsel states: 'Ic weet dat gi een dichter sijt' [I know that you are a poet; l. 74]. She announces that he will be praised and thanked if he produces a good and well-

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<sup>59</sup> Meder 1991: 28. Text 50, *Van sempelen ghelove* [Of sincere faith], is an adaptation, in all probability by Willem, of another part of Boendale's *Lekenspiegel*.

made poem (ll. 92–96). These occurrences of a protagonist called Willem evidently contribute to the coherence of the author collections.

The epilogue of text 115, *Van goeden gedachte* [Of good thoughts], underlines the author's unwavering dedication to his work. Even under bad conditions, he managed to compose a text: 'Dit ghedicht ende dese figuer / Maecte Willem, al wart hem tsuer, / Van Hildegærberch, ter selver stont / Doe hi was sieck ende onghesont' [This poem and this exemplum was made by W. of H., although it was a difficult task for him, when he was ill and unwell; ll. 109–12]. A biographical reference such as this is rare. The great majority of the author attributions stress Willem's moral authority. The poet is clearly in a position to teach his audience a lesson, as is shown, for example, by the closing lines of text 23, *Vander wankelre brugghen* [Of the wobbly bridge]. Willem states here that people should be on their guard against flattery if they want to avoid problems (ll. 140–44).

Expressions of Willem's moral authority are often accompanied by a form of the verb 'raden', to advise. The epilogue of text 57, *Vanden corencopers* [Of the corn traders], for example, reads: 'Daer omme raet Willem u allen dat / Van Hildegærberch, dat ghi sult minnen / Doeht, soe moechdi eer ghewinnen' [For this reason, W. of H. advises you all to hold virtue dear in order to gain honour; ll. 184–186]. In the closing lines of text 58, *Vander heiligher kerken* [Of the holy church], the author informs his audience that he cannot give better advice ('dbeste raden'; l. 234) than to listen to God's words. The epilogue of text 62, *Van rechtighen rechters* [Of fair judges], shows the magnitude of Willem's moral authority. This is how he starts: 'Nu siet, ghi rechters allegader, / Dit bispel heeft u Willem ghedicht' [Now look, you judges all together, Willem has composed this exemplum for you; ll. 185–86]. Powerful as they may be, Willem does not hesitate to address these judges explicitly, and to announce that they will only go to heaven if they do not act unfairly (ll. 187–92). Willem's confidence in his moral authority reaches its zenith in the epilogue of text 73, *Dit is vander ghiericheit* [This is about greed]. First, he asks: 'Wye dar den heren anders raden / Dan hem ghenoecht of is bequaem?' [Who dares to give noblemen advice which differs from what they like or suits them?; ll. 260–61].

The answer is, not surprisingly, Willem of Hildegærberch. He continues as follows: 'Van Hildegærberch Willaem / Die laeckt hem die alsulc arbeit:/ Wapen over die ghiericheit!' [W. of H. castigates anyone who acts in this way [*i.e.* does not dare to advise unpleasantly]: Down with greed!; ll. 262–64].<sup>60</sup>

In nine texts the narrator is not identical to the author. The closing lines of text 66, *Van drierehande lyden* [Of three ways of suffering], for example, state: 'Al vertellic dese woort, / Hi heet Willem, diet brochte voert, / Ende is van Hildegærberch gheboren' [Although I relate this story, the one who made it is called W. and was born in H.; ll. 220–22]. It is evident that this phrasing enabled the performance of a text by someone other than Willem, while his authorship was acknowledged at the same time. It should be noted, in addition, that the narrator in these examples holds Willem of Hildegærberch in high esteem. In text 26, *Vanden paep die sijn baeck ghestolen wert* [Of the priest whose bacon was stolen], for instance, he stresses that

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<sup>60</sup> Meder 1991: 28. Text 50, *Van sempelen ghelove* [Of sincere faith], is an adaptation, in all probability by Willem, of another part of Boendale's *Lekenspiegel*.

W. of H. made the poem, ‘ende nyemant el’ [and nobody else; l. 232]. The narrator of text 56, *Van feeste van hylic* [Of the wedding], remarks that Willem of Hildegarsberch has taught him what kind of poems are appreciated at court (ll. 165–71). According to the narrator of text 81, *Vanden sloetel* [Of the key], in rounding off his story he follows Willem’s advice (ll. 454–55). The narrator of text 74, *Van sinte Gheertruden min* [Of Saint Gheertruut’s love], declares that Willem and he agree that when people intend to travel they should raise their glasses in honour of Saint Gertrude and Saint John (ll. 439–48).<sup>61</sup> At the end of text 27, *Van drien ghebroederen* [Of three brothers], the narrator argues that people should believe what he is telling them because of Willem: ‘Des sijt zeker sonder twy, / Want Willem, die dit vant, / Die heeftet soe gheleret mi, / Dat ic en gheer gheen beter pant’ [There is no need for doubt, because Willem, who made this, has taught it to me in such a way that I do not want anything else; ll. 289–92]. It is clear that the division of roles in these texts is a literary strategy to emphasize Willem’s poetic and moral authority.<sup>62</sup>

## 6 Bodleian Library MS Arch. Selden. B.24 and Geoffrey Chaucer

Bodleian Library MS Arch. Selden. B.24 is a large manuscript, 231 folios long, of poems in English (including Scots English), made in Scotland in the late fifteenth century (probably after 1489) and/or early sixteenth century.<sup>63</sup> It is an excellent example of how a historical writer (in this case Geoffrey Chaucer) is used to create the figure of an ‘author’ who has literary authority, and how a manuscript then both embodies this author and uses his figure in order to suggest coherence to a collection of different texts and lend authority to texts by other authors.

Manuscript *S* was begun as a copy of Chaucer’s *Troilus and Criseyde*, a narrative poem from the 1380s, set during the Trojan War, and some 8200 lines in length (ff. 1–118v). However, the codex was subsequently expanded, with the addition of further poems in (at least) two stages. The manuscript as we now have it thus grew out of a major poem by Chaucer which still physically dominates the codex. Beyond this physical dominance, however, the figure of Chaucer, as poet and as representative of a particular poetic form and particular poetic subject matter, is an implicit organizational principle for the expanded codex as a whole. In a number of paratexts, the implicit presence of Chaucer becomes explicit through author attribution.

Besides *Troilus and Criseyde*, there are now 24 poems in the manuscript, including five accepted by modern scholarship as being by Chaucer: *Truth* (item 3, f. 119r), *The Complaint of Mars* (item 8, ff. 132r–136r), *The Complaint of Venus* (item 9, ff. 136r–137r), *The Parliament of Fowls* (item 13, ff. 142r–152r), and *The Legend of Good Women* (item 14, ff. 152v–191v). Of the nineteen poems in the manuscript which are not by Chaucer, six are known to be by other poets who were his contemporaries or immediate successors. Item 4 in the manuscript (f. 119r) is an extract from John Walton’s 1410 translation of *Boethius*; item 6 (ff. 120r–129v) is the *Complaint of the Black Knight* by John Lydgate, the prolific 14th/15th-century monk-poet from Bury St. Edmunds; there are two poems by Thomas Hoccleve (*Mother of God* (item 7, ff.

<sup>61</sup> The Van Hulthem manuscript preserves a version of this text in which the author attribution is lacking. See Brinkman & Schenkel 1999: 978–90 (number 192).

<sup>62</sup> In texts 12, 61 and 91 the narrator is also not identical to the author.

<sup>63</sup> For a full description of the MS see Boffey & Edwards 1997: 1–60, to which our technical description of the manuscript is very heavily indebted, especially pp. 3–4 (date), 6–12 (scribes) and 1–3 (contents).

130–131) and *Letter of Cupid* (item 16, ff. 211v–217)) and one by the fourteenth-century Welsh diplomat Sir John Clanvowe (*Book of Cupid* (item 12, ff. 138v–141v)). The authorship of *The Kingis Quair* (item 15, ff. 192r–211r) has been contested, but it is now generally accepted as the work of King James I of Scotland. The authorship of the remaining thirteen poems in the manuscript is uncertain, although the single stanza found on folio 118v is found elsewhere as part of a four-stanza poem which has been attributed to a Richard Greenacres.<sup>64</sup>

Even without paratexts, this collection would have a strong degree of visual and thematic coherence, with Chaucer (primarily the Chaucer of *Troilus and Criseyde*, especially in regard to its form and Boethian themes) as the linking factor. All of the poets named above owed formal or thematic debts to Chaucer, not only in their work as a whole but specifically in the poems by which they are represented in *S*. On the formal side, Hoccleve's poems, Lydgate's *Complaint*,<sup>65</sup> and *The Kingis Quair* are all written in rhyme royal, as are three of the poems of unknown authorship (items 2, 5, and 21, on ff. 118v, 119v–120r and 229v respectively). Chaucer was the poet who introduced this stanza-form into English, and it was his poems that popularised it and created an association between the form and a certain high style, suitable for tragic, philosophical or religious subjects. It is also the stanza-form used for *Troilus and Criseyde*, *Truth*, *The Parliament of Fowls*, *The Complaint of Mars* and *The Complaint of Venus*. This means that there is a visual continuity of *mise-en-page* between the folios that contain all but one of the genuine Chaucerian poems, and large parts of the rest of the manuscript.

Other poems respond to persistent thematic concerns of Chaucer. One of these is his abiding interest in Boethian thinking, reflected here in lines from Walton's verse translation and much of the content of *The Kingis Quair*, but also in an eight-line poem beginning 'This worldly Ioy is onuly fantasy' (item 11, f. 138r). Another characteristic Chaucerian interest are the motifs of complaint and 'fin amour', echoed in this manuscript in the *Lay of Sorrow* (item 17, ff. 217r–219r), *The Lufaris Complaynt* (item 18, ff. 219r–221v), and Clanvowe's *Book of Cupid*.

Towards the end of the manuscript, after item nineteen (ending on fol. 228v) the coherence of theme dissipates. This ties in suggestively with codicological evidence that, rather than being planned as a coherent collection from the start, the manuscript developed over time (see Boffey & Edwards 2003). It was written by two main scribes, the first being responsible for copying *Troilus and Criseyde* on folios 1–118v, and then expanding it with a further 91 folios. The second scribe picked up exactly where the first one finished (in the middle of *The Kingis Quair*, on f. 209v), before copying the next 19 folios. Finally, other later hands added the final four texts, which are less closely related in theme to the earlier pieces (although one of them is in rhyme royal).

<sup>64</sup> See *The Quare of Jelusy* in: Norton-Smith & Pravda 1976: 18–19.

<sup>65</sup> There are two eight-line stanzas at the end of *The Complaint of the Black Knight*, in the ballade-related form 'ababbcbc'. As well as being closely related to rhyme-royal (with an additional penultimate line), this form would have been familiar from Chaucer's own ballades. Several other poems in *S* use eight-line stanzas similar to this. The lyric content of the final stanzas of *The Complaint of the Black Knight* imitates Chaucerian language ('Go, lytyll quaer' echoing 'Go lytill book' at the close of *Troilus and Criseyde*).

Thus there are at least three phases in the genesis of this manuscript: first the creation of a copy of *Troilus and Criseyde*; second the addition of poems akin to it in various ways; and third the supplement of other texts by later readers. It seems probable that the second phase followed hard on the first, since the same scribe is responsible for most of the copying from this period. Moreover, as Boffey and Edwards point out, the first scribe was also responsible for the recopying of folio 1, ‘using paper stock [. . .] used elsewhere only in the second scribe’s stint in fols 213–230’ (Boffey & Edwards 1997: 17). This would suggest that all but the very last stages of the development of the manuscript were close together in space and time.

Arch. Selden. B.24 is therefore a manuscript which bears thematic and codicological evidence of a desire (whether on the part of a scribe or book-producer or buyer) to create a collection which developed and repeated, with variations, the pleasures and interests that they found in Chaucer’s longest completed poem. Yet the scribe seems not to have been content to allow these connections to speak for themselves, but added paratextual evidence to help or reassure the reader as to the coherence of the whole book.

As we now have it, the manuscript includes nine explicits that refer to Chaucer, as follows (**bold** indicates that the text in question is not now believed to be by Chaucer):<sup>66</sup>

Fol. 119r

**Fol. 119r**

**Fol. 120r**

**Fol. 129v**

**Fol. 131v**

Fol. 137r

**Fol. 138r**

Fol. 152r Fol. 191v

Explicit Chaucers counsaling

**Quod Chaucere**

**Quod Chaucere quhen hee was ryght auisit  
here endith thee maying and disport of Chaucere**

**Explicit oracio galfridi Chaucere Quod galfridus Chaucere**

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<sup>66</sup> The manuscript also contains a number of paratexts which do not mention Chaucer, but these are not recorded here.

## Quod Chaucere

here endis thee parliament of foulis Quod Galfride Chaucere  
And thus ended Chaucere  
the legendis of ladyis<sup>67</sup>

[end of *Truth*]

[end of lines from Walton's *Boethius*]

[end of anonymous poem]

[end of Lydgate's *Complaint of the Black Knight*]

[end of Hoccleve's *Mother of God*]

[end of *Complaint of Venus*] [end of 'O hie Emperice and quene celestial']

[end of the *Parliament of Fowls*]

[end of the *Legend of Good Women*]

The high concentration of attributions (correct and erroneous) within one manuscript makes it more likely that they originated with the scribe than with a series of exemplars for separate poems. All of these explicits from *S* belong to the portion of the manuscript written by the first scribe, in the part copied in the second of the three phases in its life described above, where there seems to have been a conscious effort to collect poems which share form and/or theme with the undeniably-Chaucerian *Troilus and Criseyde*. Certainly, these paratexts belong to that effort, and continually bring the figure of Chaucer to the attention of the reader, as the author and authoriser of nine of the first four-teen texts in the manuscript (to the end of the first 191 folios).

Up to that point in the manuscript (over four-fifths of the way through), the only texts not identified by the scribe as being by Chaucer are *Troilus and Criseyde*, a one-stanza poem on folio 118v, *The Complaint of Mars*, a second one-stanza poem on folio 138, and Clanvowe's *Book of Cupid*. The authorship of *Troilus and Criseyde* would have been immediately obvious, and did not require comment. It is possible that the same would have been true for *The Complaint of Mars*, but it is more significant that this poem frequently circulated in manuscript with *The Complaint of Venus*, providing grounds for thinking that the two were viewed either as one poem or as a linked pair. This is to some extent borne out in *S*, since although *Venus* begins with a large capital, and there is not much space between the last stanza of *Mars* and the first of *Venus*, the scribe has nevertheless managed to fit in the words 'The compleynt of venus folowith'. This wording marks both the separate nature of the two poems and their interconnectedness. If this is so, then perhaps the explicit on folio 137r should be read as referring to both *Venus* and *Mars*, marking both as Chaucerian. The poem on folio 118v,<sup>68</sup> whilst not attributed to Chaucer, clearly acts here as a direct comment on his *Troilus and Criseyde*. Although it is visually distinct on the page (it follows a colophon and illustration), it does take on some of the character of

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<sup>67</sup> Thus, and not 'ladyus' as in the *Facsimile* (Boffey & Edwards 1997: 2), as Phillipa Hardman pointed out in her review (1999: 1074).

<sup>68</sup> 'Blak be thy bandis and thy Wede also / Thou soroufull book of mater disesparit / In tokenyng of thyne inwarde mortall wo / Quhiche is so bad yt may not bene comparit / Thou oughtest mad outwarde bene confarit / That hast within so many a soroufull claus[e] / Swich be thyne habyte as thou hast thy caus[e]'

the valedictory stanzas towards the end of Chaucer's poem, in which he bids the book go, and entrusts it to Gower's care. This would have been more apparent to readers of *S* if recent scholars are correct to argue that the canon of Chaucer's short poems should be augmented by the addition of lyrics embedded within longer works.<sup>69</sup> This would mean that for the first four-fifths of the manuscript, the scribe has used paratextual attributions of authorship in such a way that only one poem in this section is not obviously linked to Chaucer as author.

It is important to note that the attribution to Chaucer is only ever made in an explicit, i.e. only ever *after* the poem to which it refers. Thus, assuming a linear reading of each text (if not of the manuscript as a whole), they do not instruct the reader to view a text as having Chaucerian authority in advance. Rather, this authority is granted retrospectively.

There is both variety and consistency in the wording of the paratexts themselves. They vary in form and in whether they are correct in their attribution. Most are single statements, but on folio 152r there is the double statement 'here endis thee *parliament* of foulis / *Quod* Galfride Chaucere'. This wording is also typical of these explicits, which suggests a focus on the preceding text as something which Chaucer *said*. In five cases, the word 'quod' is used. This is not the Latin relative pronoun, but rather the Middle English verb, meaning 'said', as is obvious where 'quod' is used in a paratext otherwise clearly in English, as on folio 120r and folio 152r. In a further two cases (ff. 119r and 131v) the noun used to describe the preceding text suggests speech ('counsaling', 'oracio'). This focuses attention on the presence of the person of Chaucer, on the moment when he himself is speaking. The fact that three of these explicits also use his first name further suggest that it is important to the scribe that his manuscript be strongly bound together by the figure of Chaucer. However, Chaucer here functions not simply as a historical person, but more importantly as an emblem of and repository for the literary tastes of poets who succeeded and imitated him, and the audience for which they catered. These tastes extended both to the forms and modes of writing with which Chaucer was associated, and also to the subject matter and philosophical questions that he addressed within these forms. An association of poet, form and subject matter is therefore expressed in the collection as a whole.

This blending of the poetical persona into the forms and themes with which he is associated explains to an extent how the figure of Chaucer disappears towards the end of the manuscript, whilst at the same time similar strategies of coherence are continued in his absence. The most notable example of this tendency is the text which follows on folio 192r, *The Kingis Quair*. This text is heavily indebted to Chaucer's poems in form, style, and content, and thus forms a natural continuation of the tradition preserved in earlier folios of the manuscript. However, it is the first poem in the book to receive a positive authorial attribution to anyone other than Chaucer. Doubtless, the royal authorship was too prestigious to be ignored or denied, and thus it acts as a hinge-text for the manuscript, gently moving the focus away from Chaucer himself. The only other poem in the manuscript to be given authorial attribution is *The Quare of Jelousy* (item 19, ff. 221v–228v), which has a largely unreadable

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<sup>69</sup> For a brief discussion and bibliography on this proposal, see Minnis a.o. 2003: 456–58.

closing paratext beginning ‘Explicit *quod* Au[chen]’.<sup>70</sup> It is notable that, as with all the Chaucer attributions, those to King James and ‘Auchen’ both come in closing paratexts, and also that the attributions for *The Kingis Quair* and *The Quare of Jelousy* continue the use of ‘quod’.

Thus Bodleian Library MS Arch. Selden. B.24 shows clear evidence of an attempt to create an anthology coherent in theme(s) and, to a large extent, poetic form, and the figure of the author is a key means by which this is achieved. The dominant themes and poetic form were both set for the codex by Chaucer’s *Troilus and Criseyde*, and it is Chaucer who is then specifically invoked as the (spoken) origin of much of the rest of the manuscript, through the use of paratexts.

## Conclusion

The modern discussion about the category ‘author’ has reinforced the reluctance of medievalists to think about its possible functions in the transmission of medieval literature. This is, in part, born out by the manuscript evidence. However, even in a genre as little connected to the category ‘author’ as short verse narratives, we have detected different functions of author attributions.

Since every manuscript is essentially unique, it does not come as a surprise that various aspects of author attributions feature only once in the multi-text codices which we have discussed in our case studies. Arsenal, MS 3142 is exceptional within our examples in establishing the authority of medieval authors by visually aligning their portraits with the images of *auctores* (case study 2), although the principle itself is well established in other manuscripts and genres.<sup>71</sup> Der Stricker manuscripts are the only examples discussed in this article which demonstrate that an author’s name may become a brand name for a text-type (case study 3); again we can point to parallels in the French Ysopet tradition, although the two cases differ in the type of author they are related to, namely a (nearly) contemporary one and a classical author.<sup>72</sup> Arch. Selden. B.24 is unique in showing that a particular form, rhyme royal, was used to connect texts to an author (case study 6).<sup>73</sup> One can also read this as a kind of mimicry employed by texts (and anonymous authors) to pass as texts of another, more prominent author.<sup>74</sup> Next to these unparalleled features, however, we have noted that the author attributions in our multi-text codices share striking characteristics, which make it abundantly clear that for compilers of medieval text collections authorship was an important literary and moral category.

All our case studies show that the author was seen as a highly productive organizational principle. In some cases, such as BNF, fr. 837 (Rutebeuf), Arsenal, MS 3142 (Baudouin) and Munich MS cgm 16 (Der Stricker), the compiler of the text

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<sup>70</sup> The name here is impossible to make out, but ‘Auchen’ is the tentative suggestion of Boffey & Edwards 1997: 2.

<sup>71</sup> The famous collection of German Minnesang, the Manessische Liederhandschrift, immediately comes to mind.

<sup>72</sup> Again, one could point out that the same phenomenon is also present in the transmission of German Minnesang, where Neidhart also becomes a generic term.

<sup>73</sup> We are, however, well aware that these singularities are also due to the small number of case studies and limitations of genre in our examples.

<sup>74</sup> Another obvious case would be *Die halbe Birne*—if the text is really not by Konrad von Würzburg.



collection created a paratextual framework to foreground authorship. We note a slightly different approach in Arch. Selden. B.24: here Chaucer is continuously on the mind of the reader through a high concentration of attributions in explicits. In the case of the two Dutch manuscripts we are dealing with a constructed author collection which spans the whole codex.

Occasionally, the reader of these text collections encounters biographical details of the authors involved. We are informed, for example, about Rutebuef's marriage (case study 1) and Willem of Hildegarsberch's illness (case study 5). It is clear, however, that the compilers of the text collections which we studied here were not interested in the authors' real lives. The author attributions in multi-text codices stress the artistic and, above all, the moral authority of the writers. In Arch. Selden. B.24, for example, Chaucer functions as the designator of a particular artistic form for the texts attributed to him. That authors were in a position to educate their readers and listeners is shown by Arsenal, MS 3142, in which the manuscript's visual programme adds the role of teacher to the construction of authorship. The pedagogic abilities of Willem of Hildegarsberch are frequently expressed by the verb 'raden', to advise. The *bispele* of Der Stricker are juxtaposed, hence paralleled with the moralistic tales included in the *Barlaam* tradition, with which they can also, in later manuscripts, form units of transmission.

The author as an artistic or a moral category functions in both cases as a form of legitimization. A diachronic study in the different vernaculars, beyond the scope of our essay, might tell us more about how such a function is connected, for instance, to the establishing and development of a genre, and to matters of shifting content. One of the questions we have not been able to tackle in this essay is why texts of some authors tend to be grouped together and form units of transmissions, while texts by other authors usually appear spaced out over a multi-text codex: Stricker texts tend to appear in groups, texts by Konrad von Würzburg (although present in many larger collections) do not. This might have to do with text length, which is another principle of organization.

Author attribution is much more important for multi-text manuscripts than we initially thought. But it is definitely not the only organizing principle that can be detected behind these manuscripts. Different principles overlap, coincide or lead to opposing organizational patterns that can be identified within the manuscript tradition and in individual manuscripts.

Author attributions in medieval text collections are a neglected area of research. It is therefore impossible to give the subject an exhaustive treatment in one preliminary article. Consequently, we have limited our investigations to six case studies. It is our hope that our exploration will stimulate further research into this intriguing aspect of textual transmission and compilatory practice in medieval codices.

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